

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 003151

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NP/CBM AND EUR/WE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/06/2015

TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [ETTC](#) [SP](#) [CBW](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN ON AUSTRALIA GROUP BIOLOGICAL AGENTS WORKING GROUP

REF: STATE 149921

Classified By: ESTHOFF KEN FORDER PER 1.4 (B/D)

1. (C) ESTHOFF passed reftel points August 23 to MFA Disarmament Affairs Deputy Director General Marcos Rodriguez Cantero, requesting Spanish views regarding the U.S. proposal to add 23 biological agents to the Australia Group's (AG) control list. Rodriguez Cantero informed ESTHOFF September 2 that the Spanish response to our request would be provided by Industry Ministry Deputy Director General for Foreign Trade in Defense and Dual Use Equipment Antonio Segura. Segura called ESTHOFF September 6 and made the following points:

-- biological weapons proliferation will become an increasing priority for both our nations and the AG plays a critical role in combating this threat;

-- Spain agrees that the AG needs to increase the number of controlled agents;

-- however, Spain does not think the AG should continue with only one all-encompassing control list;

-- instead, there should be at least two lists, one for the most dangerous agents, the other for agents of less importance;

-- multiple lists are already employed in other multilateral nonproliferation fora such as the MTCR and the CWC;

-- furthermore, restricting the number of agents on the higher priority list would ease the burden on licensing agents, who generally lack the expertise to focus on a too-large list.

2. (C) Segura also noted that the EU is currently considering controlling high priority biological agents in an even more restrictive fashion than that employed by the AG. He said the AG and the EU needed to coordinate their efforts to make sure they do not work at cross purposes.

3. (C) Segura concluded by underscoring that Spain would not/not block any AG consensus position in favor of the U.S. proposal to add the 23 agents. It merely believes that its "two lists proposal" is a better idea and should be considered as well.

AGUIRRE